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ESTABLISHMENT OF THE WORK PROGRAMME OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

Work programme [1]

1. Pursuant to a New Partnership for Development: the Cartagena Commitment, adopted at the eighth session of the Conference, the Standing Committee agreed, on the basis of Board decision 398 (XXXVIII) which sets out in Annex B the terms of reference of the Standing Committee on Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries, the following work programme for the period up to the next session of the Conference:

Promoting and expanding trade among developing countries

2. The Standing Committee will:

(a) concerning trade expansion programmes of developing countries: (i) propose ways and means for increasing trade opportunities in goods and services among developing countries; (ii) propose ways and means for enhancing competitivity therein; (iii) identify opportunities for the development of business networks, including trade-information systems, in support of the expansion of trade; (iv) explore potentialities and recommend the adoption of complementary measures in areas such as investment, production, money, finance, transport and technology; and (v) explore the possibility for having a target-oriented approach for trade expansion among developing countries;

[1] Adopted by the Standing Committee on Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries, at its 4th (closing) plenary meeting, on 15 January 1992.

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(b) develop an inventory of trade barriers, disincentives and other impediments to trade and identify the trade opportunities arising from their elimination.

Encouraging enterprise cooperation

3. The Standing Committee will:

(a) promote enterprise cooperation within and between groupings and also with other interested countries; encourage the participation of the public and private enterprise sectors in ECDC activities; encourage the establishment of institutional mechanisms such as business information networks, and promote contact between individual enterprises and between their organizations such as chambers of commerce and industry, associations of trading companies; and

(b) identify opportunities for the establishment of joint ventures and other forms of cooperation among enterprises of developing countries at the subregional, regional, and interregional levels and propose measures for implementing them and for encouraging the participation of developed countries.

Regular consultations

4. The Standing Committee will make the necessary arrangements for a pragmatic policy dialogue among the donor community, subregional, regional and interregional groupings as well as participants in ECDC programmes and projects with a view, in particular, to mobilizing support for designing and implementing regional initiatives, interregional activities and networking of integration and cooperation schemes. In particular:

(a) encourage the exchange of experiences among integration groupings;

(b) participants in ECDC programmes and projects, including regional, subregional and interregional groupings can inform the donor community of their short and long-term development objectives and external assistance needs;

(c) the donor community may provide information on their assistance programmes relating to cooperation among developing countries; drawing on this information and studies by the secretariat and other relevant organizations, prospects for improvement of the assistance programmes may be identified;

(d) identify programmes and projects as well as measures for international support to economic, technical and other forms of cooperation among developing countries;

(e) explore new potentials for cooperation among developing countries and with other interested countries or their groupings.

Strengthening subregional and regional integration and fostering interregional cooperation

5. The Standing Committee will:

(a) On the basis of subregional, regional and interregional experience on economic cooperation, identify actions that would facilitate the use of integration schemes as instruments to enhance ECDC and increase participation of subregional, regional and interregional organizations in the work of the Committee;

(b) examine possible measures to address specific questions arising out of regional and subregional trade liberalization and preference schemes such as the loss of fiscal revenue; special treatment of less developed countries, more particularly the least developed countries that are members of groupings; rules of origin; and the role of regional funds for adjustments;

(c) identify possibilities concerning various forms of sectoral cooperation so as to create the conditions for a more efficient allocation of resources, including setting up of subregional programmes designed to encourage the building and expansion of complementary production structures of countries members of integration groupings;

Enlarging and deepening monetary, financial and investment cooperation

6. The Standing Committee will:

(a) keep under review trends and developments in monetary and financial cooperation among developing countries;

(b) analyse the particular problems of clearing and payments arrangements of developing countries, as well as arrangements of developing countries with other interested countries, and explore ways and means of overcoming them;

(c) consider studies on and keep under review developments in trade financing, covering the national, regional, subregional and interregional domains, in particular, developments regarding the establishment of an interregional trade-financing facility and the strengthening of national trade-financing facilities;

(d) consider studies on regional capital markets and other modes of market-based financial cooperation among financial and banking institutions, with a view to identifying obstacles and new possibilities for cooperation;

(e) identify areas and opportunities for the flow of direct investment among developing countries.

Technical support, assistance and skill development

7. The Standing Committee will keep under review the UNCTAD secretariat's technical cooperation activities in furtherance of the implementation of the Committee's work programme. The Committee requests the UNCTAD secretariat to:

(a) provide advice and technical assistance upon request to subregional, regional and interregional economic cooperation and integration schemes and their member states in fulfilment of their objectives;

(b) mobilize assistance and support for designing and implementing intercountry initiatives, interregional activities and networking of integration and cooperation schemes, as well as encouraging enterprises and other economic agents such as investors and professional and trade associations to participate actively in these initiatives and activities, taking into account the work of other relevant organizations;

(c) advise on national and regional trade financing facilities and on the improvement and expansion of payments and clearing arrangements;

(d) suggest methods and possibilities for the development of regional capital markets and for strengthening interactions between them;

(e) identify projects which offer prospects for the establishment of joint ventures among enterprises of developing countries;

(f) organize and participate in specific forums, seminars, workshops, round-tables and expert groups of a subregional, regional and interregional nature;

(g) liaise with relevant organizations both within and outside the United Nations system, especially the regional commissions, with a view to evolving analyses, activities and programmes in support of ECDC.